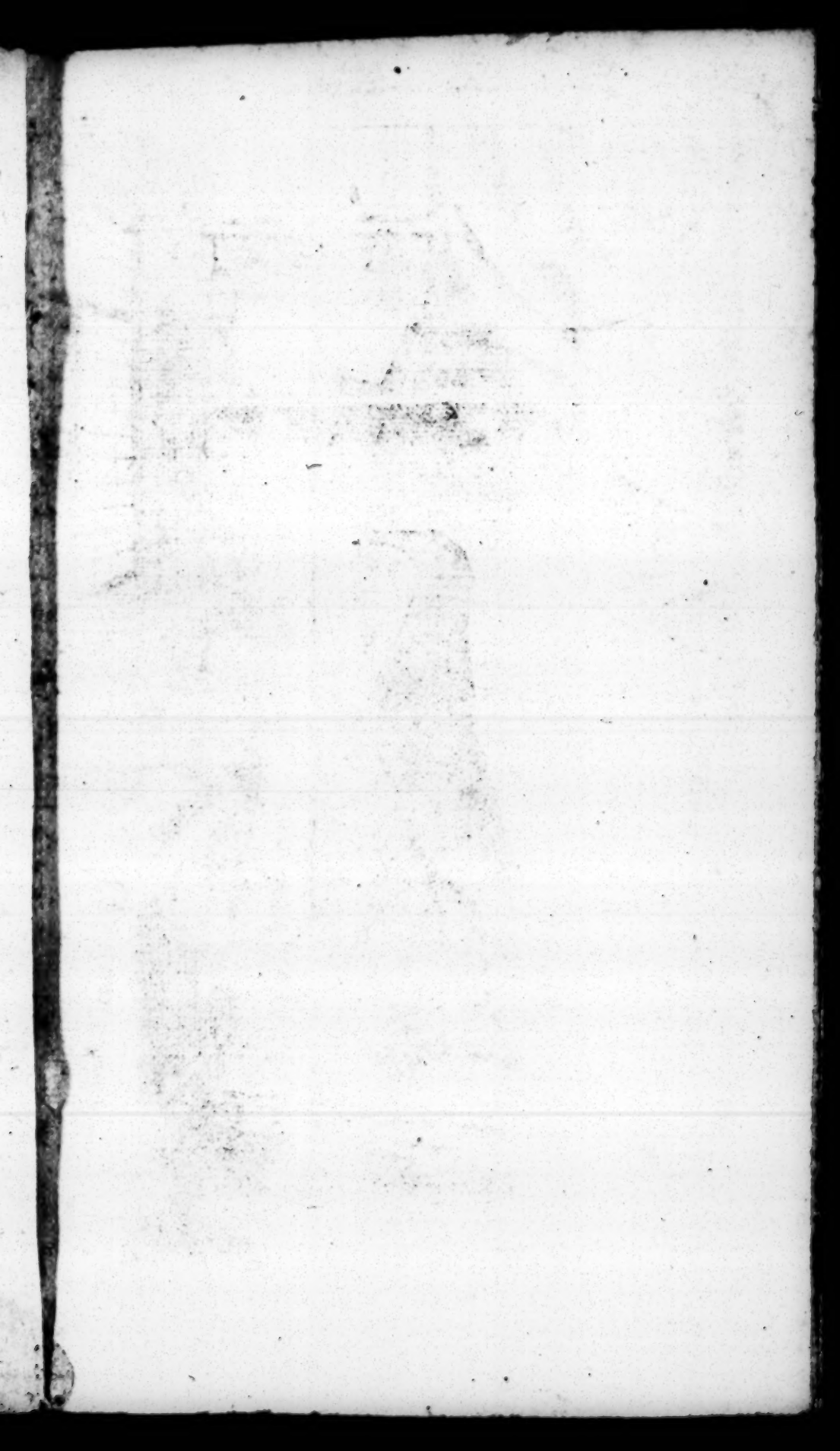




*Ædes Christi in
Academia Oxoniensi*

Fig. 12.





Madame La Valliere

The Penitent Lady :
OR
REFLECTIONS
ON THE
MERCY
OF
GOD.

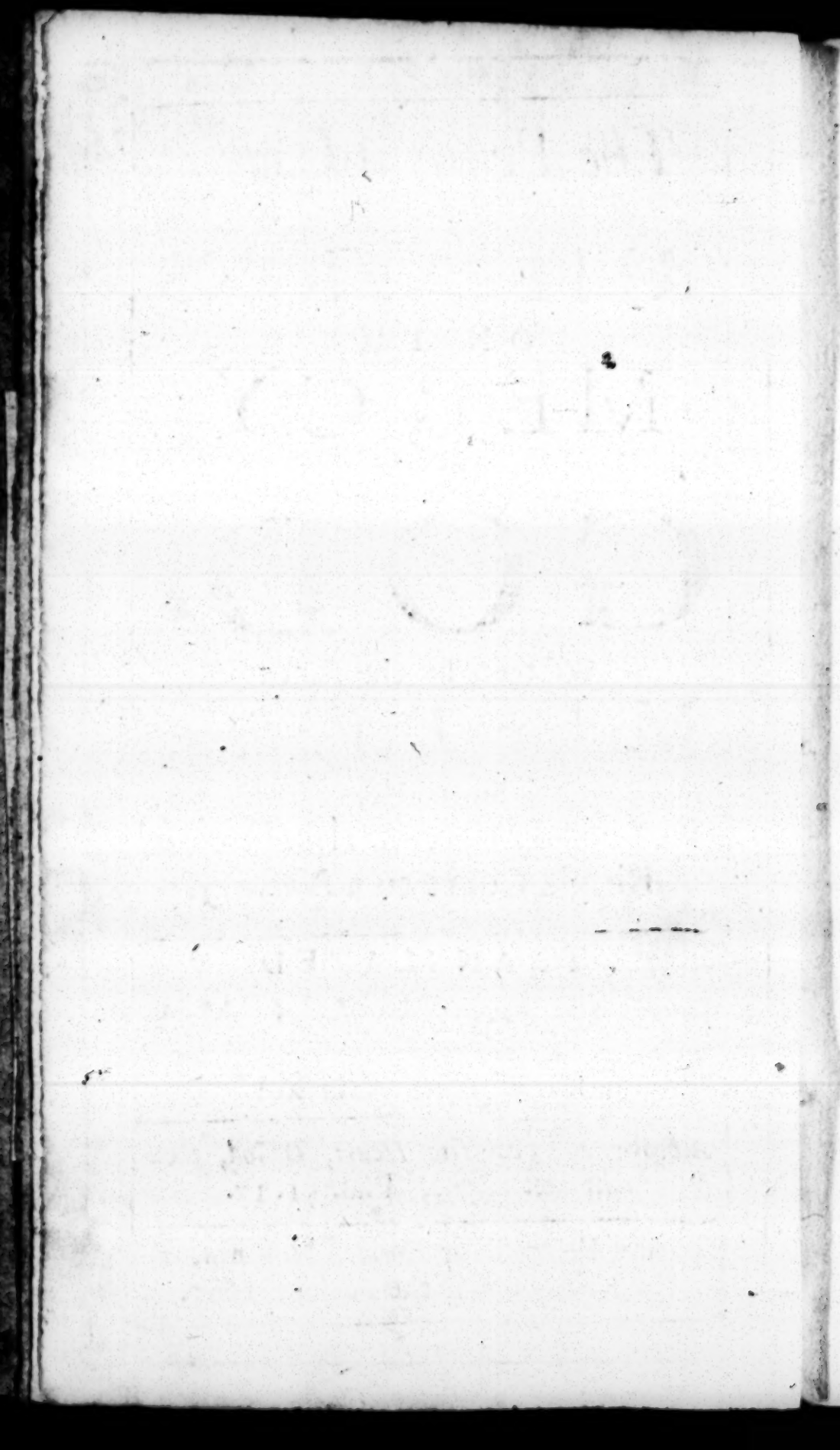
Written by the Fam'd
Madam *La Valliere*,
Since Her
Retirement from the *French*
King's Court to a *Nunnery*.

TRANSLATED
From the *French* by L. A. M. A.

The Second Edition.

*A broken and a contrite Heart, O God, thou
wilt not despise, Psal. 51. 17.*

London, Printed for Dorman Newman, at
the *Kings-Arms* in the *Poultrey*, 1685.



The Preface.

T IS a common Saying, confirm'd by Experience, *That Example is far more prevalent than Precept*; and the Reason is, because the one seems to be *the transcript of our Mind*, whereas 'tis evident that the other is too often bias'd by

The Preface.

Interest, and an over-
weaning conceit of
our own Sufficiency.
For *Pride* and *Vain-*
glory may incline that
Man to recommend
Mortification and *Re-*
pentance, and extol
even the *Stoicism* of
Cato, who privately
hugs and caresses his
darling *Lust* and leads
a Life more luxurious
than *Sardanapalus*: but
he

The Preface.

he who in the vigour
of his Youth and the
full career of Pleasure
sets bounds to his
inordinate *Appetites* ,
who retires from the
World and its *Va-*
nities , before they
leave him ; he plainly
demonstrates , that
there is some more
sublime Happiness he
pursues after , some
more perfect *Good*

A 3 which .

The Preface.

which attracts his Affections. And therefore one great end of our Saviour's coming into the World was to be a *Pattern of Holy Living and Dying*, to convince us, that notwithstanding the Infirmities of our *Nature*, the most stubborn *Lusts* may be subdu'd, the most alluring *Temptations* may be

The Preface.

be *resisted*, and Gospel-
obedience may be per-
form'd if we call in
his *Grace* to the as-
sistance of our *bonest*
endeavours. God re-
quires nothing of us
but what is highly
just and *reasonable*,
what he gives us
power to *perform*;
and in all Ages of the
World he sets before
our eyes the *Examples*

The Preface.

of some *Heroick Souls*,
who bravely conquer
those *Armado's* of
Temptations we are apt
to fancy *invincible*,
and prefer the igno-
miny of the *Cross*,
before the most luscious
gratifications of
sence. In the first rank
of these, I may place
this *Penitent Lady*, the
Authoreſs of these *de-*
vout Reflections, which
I hope

The Preface.

I hope will find the better entertainment in our *English* Nations, because Translated from the *French*; for since we are so foolishly fond of the *Apes* and *Peacocks*, the *Modes* and *Vanities* of that People, I have no reason to fear that their *Gold* will be an unacceptable Present. It may perhaps be

The Preface.

expected that I should give an Account of the former Life of this *devout Convert*, but since that is already

*The History
Of the Amours
of the *French*-
Court.

done in another * **Book**, by a light & amorous Pen, I shall not intermix any part of it with so grave and serious a Subject; besides, the Publisher of these Papers in the Original, seems mo-

The Preface.

deftly to decline it.
'Twill more nearly
concern us curiously
to pry into our *hearts*,
to *examine what sins*
we have been guilty of,
to *imitate her Repen-*
tance, and seriously to
Meditate on these *Pi-*
ous Reflections, which,
like the Nails in the
Hand of *Jael*, may
with the *Assistance of*
the Holy Spirit, fasten
our

The Preface.

*our Corruptions to the
feet of Christ's Cross.*

I foresee it will be
objected that this Pi-
cture is copied from
a *Popish* Original. And
truly 'twas this Con-
sideration which for
some time diverted
my Resolutions of
making it publick ;
but after I have several
times carefully re-
view'd it, I cannot
discover

The Preface.

discover the least stroke or Lineament of so Monstrous a Parent, but rather stand amaz'd, that this precious *Jewel* should be found amongst the rubbish of the *Romish* Church. I am heartily convinc'd, that the *Principles* of that Perswasion tend to the encouragement of *Vice*, and the promoting

The Preface.

ting *Debauchery*, and therefore am astonish'd at this *Miracle of Gods Mercy*, which from so corrupt a Tree has produc'd such *Good Fruit*. For my part, I am inclin'd to think, that either her Mind was extraordinarily enlighten'd or else that by the very light of Nature she discover'd the pernicious

The Preface.

cious Tenents of that Church.

And this may serve to instruct us, that the influences of God's *Holy Spirit* are not confin'd to so narrow a Sphere as some mens uncharitableness would suggest, but that *in every Nation he that feareth God and worketh Righteousness shall be accepted of him.*
Those

The Preface.

Those who are of
a contrary Opinion
would do well to
transmit to Posterity
some more eminent
Examples of Peni-
tence, and genuine
Instances of fervent
Devotion. And in
the mean while, let
me beseech them to
look over these Pa-
pers, to conform their
Lives to the Practice
of

The Preface.

of the 'Truths contain'd therein ; lest at the *last Day* they should see Publicans and Harlots enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, whilst they themselves are shut out.

The

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would be pleas'd to direct her con-
tinually in the straight Way which
leads unto him , and not permit
her to flatter her self , that she
has repented, when she is running
on*

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*That she will every Day offer up
unto God the Sacrifice of Thanksgiv-
ing, for opening her Eyes
and converting her unto him-
self. That she will Write down
these Resolutions which she made
at the time of her Conversion;
to the end that she may be al-
ways mindful of these Obliga-
tions she has laid upon her self,
and by which she must be Judg'd
at the Last Day,*

105

A N

A N

Advertisement.

I*T was the saying of a Father of the Church, That 'tis more easie to find out a Man that has preserv'd his Innocency from his Baptism, than a sincere and hearty Penitent ; Because few are Converted as they ought to be : Nevertheless, God, out of his infinite Goodness and Compassion, does from time to time turn the Hearts of some Prodigious Sinners ; demonstrating to the World, that he is truly*
B a God

An Advertisement.

a God of Mercy, and that there is no Man who has been never so desperately Wicked, but he will receive him, if he returns with a heart truly sensible of his Offences. He does not desire the Death of a Sinner, for he came to lay down his Life for such, but only that they would be Converted and live. Now if the whole Church stood amaz'd at the Conversion of a Prince whose Devotion was not surpass'd by the austere Votaries of the times he liv'd in : We have no less reason to admire this of a Lady, whom the Mercy of God singled out from a debauch'd Age, the affluence of all sinful Pleasures, to be a Miracle of Penitence.

For

An Advertisement..

For it will be easie to judge by these Pious Reflections, (which are now made Publick, and were Compos'd after her Retirement from the World, and Recovery from a dangerous fit of Sicknes) that her Soul was deeply affected with a Divine Love; and that by how much the more earnest she was in the persuit of sinful Pleasures, and forgetful of her Eternal Welfare, by so much the more she is at present inspired with the Love of God, and desires Life itself, for no other purpose, than to get an Interest in her Saviours Merits, and to blot out the Infamy of her former Life, by a sincere Repentance. Her Name is conceal'd out of

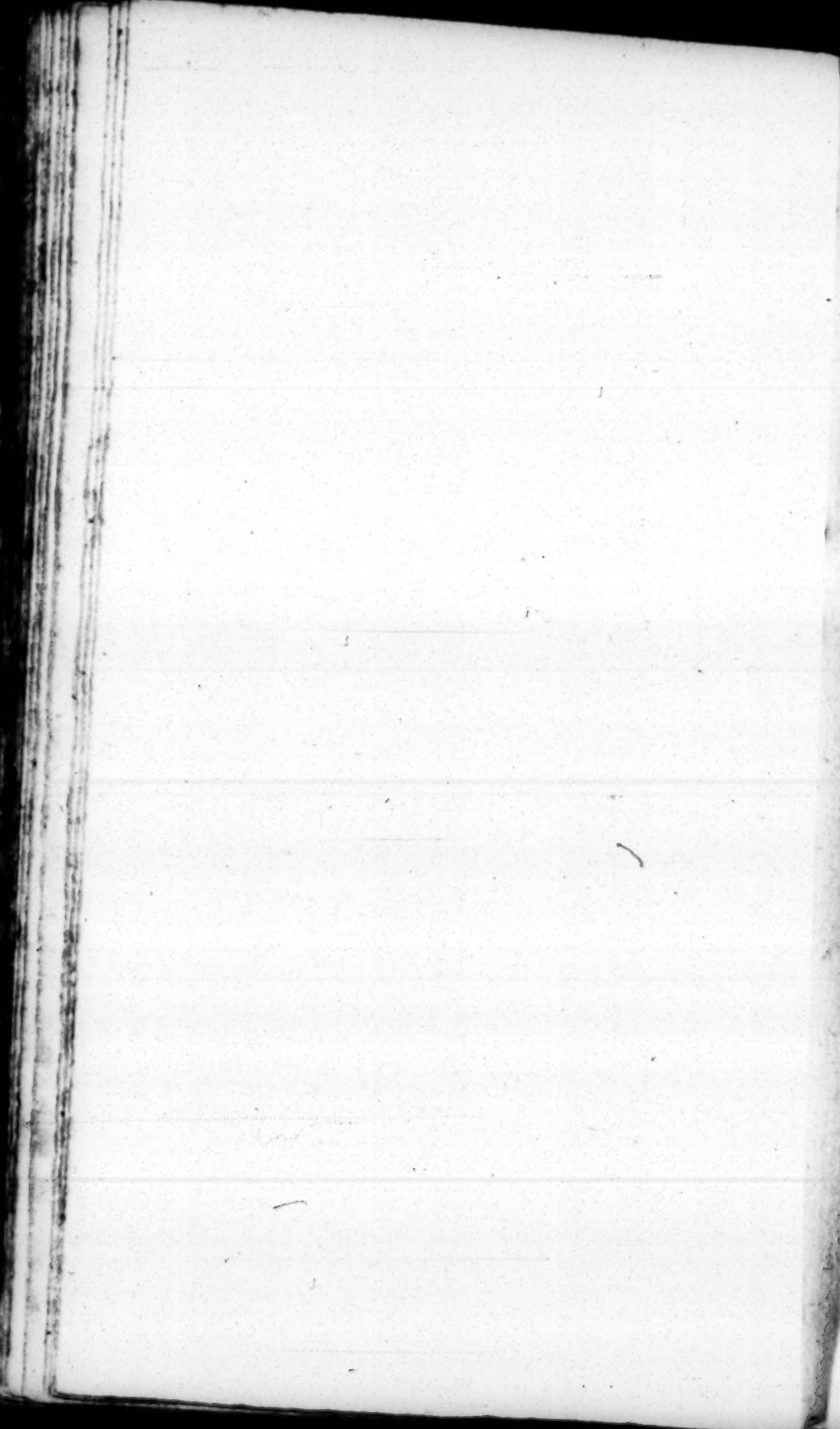
An Advertifment.

respect to her Modesty and Humility, which would never have permitted these Papers to have been Printed, had they not been convey'd away by a vertuous Lady, who esteem'd it a great piece of Injustice to with-hold so profitable an Help from those poor Souls who are desirous to Reform their Lives and bid Adieu to their Vicious Conversations. For tho' several Books have been writ on this Subject, yet she look'd upon this as the best Model'd and Pen'd with the most Divine and Moving Expressions that ever she saw. God grant that they who Read these Lines may be Inspired with the same Thoughts this Devout Soul was; That those

An Advertisemnt.

those who have been guilty of the same Sins, may imitate her Repentance, and Husband that Time which the Mercy of God has prolonged to them, in considering what will conduce to the advantage of their Immortal Souls.

B 3 REELE.



REFLECTIONS

ON THE

Mercy of G O D,

In Form of Prayers.

REFLECTION I.

*Upon our Obligations to Consecrate
that Life to Gods Glory, which
we hold from his Mercy, and the
Care you ought to take, lest we
should be Insnar'd into sin.*

WHat shall I render unto
my God, for giving me
Life and Health, for
Reprieving me from the Gates
of Hell and preserving my Soul;

and in short , for all those Favours which he has vouchsafed to me his poor Servant ?

Shall it suffice , O my God, to acknowledge thy Benefits ? will it be any recompence, to employ the remainder of that time in thy service, which hitherto has been spent in affronting thy Majesty ? or will the divorcing those unlawful Pleasures, to which I have been formerly wedded , satisfy thy Justice , and blot out my Transgressions ? In short, will it be sufficient to secure me from Eternal Misery , that henceforward I will aspire after nothing but Eternal Happiness , the fruition of thy self, and those ravishing Pleasures which are at thy right - hand for evermore ?

Grant that thy Rays may enlighten my Reason, and that thy Grace may penetrate my Soul ;
help

help me out of that deplorable estate into which I am fallen, and inspire me with Faith to pray unto thee; and good God, suffer me not to fall into such a Lethargy as may render me unmindful of my Souls health, *or sleep the sleep of Eternal Death.*

Oh let me never forget that dreadful hour, when thou cald'st me to an account for my sins; when I beheld Death ready to seize upon my soul and carry it into everlasting torments; and let thy infinite compassion be deeply engraven upon my memory, *which in the midst of Judgment did remember Mercy,* and rescue me from thy fiery Indignation.

Oh that the Joy which fills my Soul for the return of my Health may not Justle out thy Grace, and Reconcile me to the World, that those vain *Ideas* of Sensual

Pleasure, may be quite ras'd out
 of my fancy ,and neverre-assume
 the place of those solid Truths
 which by thy Mercy are writtē
 there.

REFLECT. II.

*She Prays unto God ,to strengthen
 her Resolutions ,and to enable
 her to approach unto him with a
 pure heart .*

Restore unto me , O my God
 the health of my Soul, and
 enable me to desire of thee ,a
 bove all things , that Holy Joy
 which the vicissitudes of these
 sublunary things cannot deprive
 me of ; I mean the Joy to see my
 self redeem'd from the slavery
 of sin , in a state of salvation
 and led by the hand of thy Di-
 vine Providence, to my Heavenly
 Canaan

Canaan Season also my Heart with thy Grace, that Spirit and Principle of Action, which, having wash'd us clean in the Blood of our Saviour, furnishes us with strength to persevere to the end in the way of his Commandments.

For alas ! what will become of those Vows which I made unto thee, when I was surrounded with Fear, and in danger of losing my Soul ; I say, what will become of them, unless thou, O Lord, out of the abundance of thy Mercy art pleas'd to imprint them on my mind, fix them in my thoughts, and enable me to conquer the Temptations of my visible and invisible Enemies, who use all means possible, either to terrifie, or to decoy me into sin.

O Lord, who succourest the poor, and takest pleasure in those
tho-

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of my fancy, and neverre-assume
the place of those solid Truths
which by thy Mercy are writtē
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enable me to desire of thee, a-
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which the vicissitudes of these
sublunary things cannot deprive
me of; I mean the Joy to see my
self redeem'd from the slavery
of sin, in a state of salvation,
and led by the hand of thy Di-
vine Providence, to my Heavenly
Canaan.

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O Lord, who succourest the poor, and takest pleasure in those
tho

that come unto thee with Faith, and with an humble and contrite Heart; We acknowledge our selves to be weak and miserable Creatures, and relie wholly upon thy Grace, the proper Medicine to heal and comfort us. *Search my Heart and try my Reins*, and grant me that infallible Medicine which dispels the most contagious fumes of sin; which will sanctifie my Soul, and preserve it safe unto Everlasting Life.

But grant me also, O my God that whilst I beg these Blessings of thee, I may be endow'd with such a frame of mind, and such other qualifications, as encline thee to say, *Amen*, to my petitions.

prepare your selves, O my Body, my Spirit, and my Soul, by the assistance of God's grace, to appear before your Master and your God; to the end that
he

he may apply that Divine Medicine which will make you whole.

For how dare I approach the Holy of Holies, without preparation, and intrude my self a most miserable sinner into the presence of my God ?

Therefore, O Lord, make me sensible of my want and misery, and of thy Majesty and Love, before I come to this Heavenly Banquet, where *I shall eat and drink, either my Eternal Health, or Damnation.*

REFLECT.

REFLECT. III.

Upon those Vertues which are necessary for our approaching unto Christ; from the Example of the Canaanite, the Samaritan, and Mary Magdalen.

TEach me in the trouble of my Spirit, and anguish of my Heart, with what degree of grief my Soul ought to be affected for its Offences against so great, so good a God; and what Purity of Body and Soul is required, that it may be filled with Divine shame.

How I may offer up a pure and agreeable Sacrifice too thee, having now a mind too much delighted in the vanities of the world, and a heart too much led away by them.

How

How I may lodge thee in the Temple of my Breast , from whence , with difficulty , I have just now chas'd thy most inveterate Enemies.

In short, the Way for a Notorious Sinner, who is without Repentance and without Love, to be made Partaker of that Christ who was crucified for him, is, to defer coming to the Table of the Lord, until he is duly prepared , lest he commit the most hainous Sacrilege. Inspire me then with such a hatred of sin, as may confirm my resolutions to abstain from every thing that displeaseth thee, and with Passionate desires to love thee alone.

Give me that humble and contrite spirit whose groans thou dost never refuse ; I would say, Inspire me by thy Grace, with the self-same dispositions with which

which the poor *Canaanite* prostrated her self at thy feet.

Look upon me ,O Lord, whilst I approach unto thee, as thou didst that humble stranger. I would say as a poor Dog, who is sufficiently happy, when permitted to pick up the Crumbs which fall from the Table where thou featest thine Elect.

Look with compassion upon this poor sinner, who, like the *Samaritan* woman, being inflamed with a sense of her sins, beseeches one drop of Living Water, to quench the fervor of her soul, and thirst of sin.

But above all, incline me to Imitate *Mary Magdalen*; with that holy penitent, let me wash thy Feet with my Tears, and by endeavouring to love thee much, in some measure answer thy love in forgiving me much.

Deal

Deal with me as with these three Holy Women, whom thou hast made the living Witnesses of thy Mercy; that by these Examples I may be taught what trust ought to be put in thy Goodness. Fit me, O Lord for the approaching thy Table, and participating of thy Divine Mysteries. Give me a lively, humble and constant Faith, which may produce an Universal Obedience to thy Law, the solid foundation of my Eternal Welfare.

REFLECT.

REFLECT. IV.

Concerning the Constancy and Stability of the Faith, necessary to a Penitent Soul.

GIVE me therefore, O Lord a lively Faith, which may animate all my Actions, and notwithstanding my weakness, nourish thy Love and thy Grace in my Soul. A steadfast Faith, whereby I may sincerely believe thy Holy Word, and when the World allures me with its temptations put me in mind, that *no man can serve two Masters.*

A humble Faith whereby I may discern that conformity to this World is the greatest impediment of my conformity unto Jesus Christ.

In fine, an enlightned Faith which may render the Grandeur

of this World contemptible to me, and demonstrate *that the fashion of this World passes away*, and that there is nothing solid and lasting, but God alone. For alas! my best desires are fleeting and unconstant, *like the flowers of the field, which to day are, and to morrow are cut down and wither.*

O Lord, who art delighted in acts of Mercy, and who alone canst change the heart, turn my inconstancy into a steady resolution of serving thee, and my irregular passions into an earnest pursuit of thy love.

Let it not suffice me, that I am disgusted with worldly things, or perhaps estranged from them; this may proceed from a spirit of pride, or be the effort of my reason. But direct my ways and purifie my thoughts, that at the same time I am convinc'd of the
vanity

vanity and emptiness of earthly things, I may be also assisted with thy grace to return unto thee: that my Heart being cleans'd, instead of those Legions of Vanities, which have formerly possess'd it, it may be consecrated a Holy Temple, and dedicated to the Service of my God.

Preserve me from the sweet poyson of the pleasures of this World, that sun-shine of Fortune, which sooner disrobes us of our Innocence, than the most severe blasts of Adversity. Let me look up unto no other God or Providence than thine alone.

Correct me, O Lord, but with the chastisement of a Son, which in the midst of the most glittering prosperity afflicts and humbles us, brings our hearts home unto thee, and convinces us that we are but Men; that is to say, weak & feeble creatures, blinded
by

by our passions, and subject to all sorts of misery.

Take away from me that inordinate love of my self, and that original corruption, from whence springs all my Misery ; 'tis from this that instead of serving thee in Spirit and in Truth, instead of making thy Glory the end of all my thoughts, words and actions, I persue after nothing, but the gratification of my irregular Lusts.

Let me be never so rash and so ungrateful unto thee, O my God, as to fancy my self the Author of those Reflections, which I sometimes make, when I retire my self from the hurry of this world, wherein an unquencheable appetite torments the most happy persons, and renders them miserable slaves, even by the accomplishment of their most earnest desires.

REFLECT.

REFLECT. V.

*The Thoughts of a penitent Soul,
fearful of being deceiv'd by the
Appearance of a False Conver-
sion.*

WHat am I, my Lord and my God? what am I but a proud Atome, a poor, blind creature, who continually goes astray when thou withholdst the Rays of thy Grace. I deserve to be annihilated, if at any time I should attempt the conversion of my self, by my own power, without the assistance of thy Grace.

Mortifie in my soul all vain glory, every thing that tempts me to too good an opinion of my self; but chiefly that frothiness of humour which serves only to divert me from thy ways, to deprive me of the benefit of my afflictions,

visions, and the sweet comfort
of thy Holy Spirit.

Give me humility and distrust
of my own reason? let me thirst
after doing good more, and car-
nal knowledge less; lest valuing
more than thy grace, I lose my
self; and instead of becoming a
good Christian, become a Phi-
losopher; better acquainted
with the Maxims of *Aristotle* and
Descartes, than the knowledge
of the Cross.

O how vain and deceitful are
the thoughts of man, unless go-
vern'd by *that Wisdom which is*
from above, by that Wisdom
which is Foolishness to the
World, because it is unacquainted
with it; by that Wisdom which
God has concealed from the
wise, and *discovered to the*
humble; by that Wisdom which
laughs at humane subtilty, and
acts only according to the grace
of

of Jesus Christ, In short, b
that Wisdom which is produc
by the Fear of God, and whic
is the beginning and the end o
all true Wisdom.

Permit me not, O my God, t
flatter my self, that I hate all sin
because I am perhaps restrain
from Luxury and passion; Le
me not flatter my self, that
am taken off from loving th
Creature, because my diversions
are innocent.

Let me not flatter my self, th
I have mortified my passions; fo
I find them revive with mor
strength then ever, and enclin
me to self-love; which is th
more dangerous, decause by ju
stifying these irregular motions
it renders me deaf to the dictate
of my reason, and the holy in
spirations of thy grace.

Let me not fancy my self to b
without pride, ambition, self
love

ve, because I despise the World
 and scorn to owe those Honours
 Fortune has stripp'd me of, to
 anything else but my ovvn deserts.
 Let me not so much deceive my
 self, as to think I am throughly
 converted, when indeed I have
 only chang'd the sins of sense,
 for those of the mind: A pro-
 fane, proud, and sensual Life,
 which I was always tormented
 by reflecting on my Crimes and
 the remorse of my Conscience;
 for a life in which my whole en-
 deavour is to gratifie self love,
 and enjoy the pleasures of the
 World; and in the mean while,
 lose my precious time, forget my
 God, hazard the salvation of my
 soul, & obtain nothing but the Mo-
 rality of a Heathen, which alone
 will not save me at the day of Judg-
 ment: O state, truly deplorable,
 and the more so, because I am
 not sensible of my condition, but

C

rest

of Jesus Christ, In short, that Wisdom which is produced by the Fear of God, and which is the beginning and the end of all true Wisdom.

Permit me not, O my God, to flatter my self, that I hate all sin because I am perhaps restrained from Luxury and passion; Let me not flatter my self, that I am taken off from loving the Creature, because my diversions are innocent.

Let me not flatter my self, that I have mortified my passions; for I find them revive with more strength then ever, and encline me to self-love; which is the more dangerous, because by justifying these irregular motions it renders me deaf to the dictates of my reason, and the holy inspirations of thy grace.

Let me not fancy my self to be without pride, ambition, self-love

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 and scorn to owe those Honours
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 World; and in the mean while,
 lose my precious time, forget my
 God, hazard the salvation of my
 soul, & obtain nothing but the Mo-
 rality of a Heathen, which alone
 will not save me at the day of Judg-
 ment: O state, truly deplorable,
 and the more so, because I am
 not sensible of my condition, but

C

rest

rest satisfied without endeavouring after any other Repentance or Conversion.

REFLECT. VI.

Upon the Opposition of a Worldly Life to the suffering Life of Jesus Christ.

TEach me, O Lord, that this sort of life is not the life of a Christian, and that the end of Christ's Death and Incarnation was not to instate us in so delicate and effeminate a life, as might gratifie sense and indulge the flesh; and that all Moral Vertues are but dead Works, unless enlivened by the Merits and Vertue of *Jesus Christ*.

That unless the inclinations of our hearts are changed, it will nothing avail a sinner to reform his

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those Riches which endure but for a moment ,and endeavour to obtain those incorruptible treasures, which *Moth and Rust do not corrupt, which will never fly away.*

That the consideration of that private life in which thou wast pleased to disguise thy self from the eyes of the world, may create in me a desire to be forgotten by it; that I may retire and employ my self only in the great business of my salvation.

That the receiving of thy holy body and precious blood, those sacred pledges of thy love, which thou wast pleas'd to leave us, when thou gavest thy life for our offences ; may produce in me a holy horror at the consideration of the cause of thy Death, and a detestation of all sin.

That I may rejoice and be exceeding glad when I shall be disgrac'd

disgrac'd and contemned, remem-
 bring my Saviour's humility, who
 was set at nought by *Herod* and
 the Court, where he never ap-
 pear'd but once, and then on pur-
 pose to be despised.

That those Scourges which
 rent thy Sacred Body, those
 Thorns which pierced thy Pre-
 cious Head, may penetrate my
 callous heart, render me truly
 penitent, and willing, for the
 love of thee, to undergo all those
 rigours of Mortification and Self-
 denial, which are requisite for the
 subduing of our Lusts.

In fine, that the consideration
 of thy ignominious death on the
 Cross, on which thou perfectest
 the work of my salvation in grief
 and misery, may be my only hope.

REFLECT. VII.

*What the Hope of a Penitent Soul
ought to be.*

THis is the second Favour I
desire of thee for the Me-
rits of that precious Blood
which trickled from thy Sacred
Wounds, and which thou didst
offer to thy Eternal Father for
the price of my Redemption.

That thou wouldst be pleas'd
to give me a true hope in thy
Mercies: I say, Lord, a true
hope, because there is nothing
more common, than to abuse thy
Mercy, by making it an incou-
ragement to sin more securely;
than for sinners to hope in thy
goodness, without so much as en-
deavouring to repent: and to go
on in their sins with confidence
of impunity, tho' hereby they
make

make God unjust, and rather the
 refuge and confident of their
 Crimes, than the true Protector
 of Innocence and Vertue.

Now whilst thy Thunder has
 awakned me, and thy Rod cor-
 rected me.

Now whilst I am sensible of
 the wickedness of my Life, the
 dangerous condition of my Soul,
 and am convinc'd that there is
 a Heaven, a Hell, and an Eter-
 nity.

Now whilst I am sensible that
 those things which hitherto in-
 charmed me, were but lying Va-
 nities, whilst I am inflamed more
 than ever with an ardent desire
 of being sincerely converted unto
 thee. Teach me, O Lord, that
 as thou art a God full of Mercy
 and Compassion to those sinners
 who hope in thy Mercy, and re-
 turn unto thee with all their
 heart: so thou art a terrible God

to those who presume on it, only that they may multiply their offences, and after having tasted the sweet comforts of the Holy Spirit, scorn and neglect it. For it is not, Lord, of those miserable wretches, that thou sayest, *to those that knock it shall be opened?*

Is it not of these Miscreants of whom thou hast pronounc'd, *that thou wilt withdraw the Bowels of thy Mercy?*

Is it not against these impious persons thou hast threatned, *that thou wilt mock at their Calamity;* and that instead of finding at their last hour the compassion of a tender Father, they shall experience the Justice and Vengeance of an angry God?

REFLECT.

REFLECT. VIII.

What Effect a true Repentance ought to have upon our Conversations and what kind of Guide she ought to enquire after for the conduct of her Soul.

THAT I may avoid all the flatteries of Self-love, by which the Devil takes occasion to rob me of thy grace; Grant, O my God, that instead of searching into my corruption for palliating Remedies to skin over my Sores, I may place my self at the Tribunal of thy Justice, and there apply those Causticks which are necessary to consume Gangrene and Rottenness of my Soul.

That is to say, Lord, permit me not to be deceived, or rather let me not take pleasure in deceiving my self; in fancying that

I shall make amends for such a Heathenish life as mine has been, such criminal and scandalous passions, whilst I continue in the same sinful Habits, the same Opportunities, the same Pleasures, and, perhaps, the same Crimes too.

Let me not add this to the heap of my sins; to wit, the disbelief of thy Gospel, the interpreting it according to my fancy, or adapting it to countenance my Enormities.

Ah Lord! how do I dishonour thee by my works, whilst I praise thee with my mouth; whilst I boast that I am a Christian, I act contrary to thy holy Law, and every day renounce those Vows I made unto thee in my Baptism.

Ah Lord! who punishest my ingratitude, by suffering me to fall from one Precipice to another, from a neglect of thy Grace,

Grace , to errour and hardness of heart. Permit me not to pitch upon a Mountebank, instead of an able Physician, who can apply proper Remedies to the inveterate Maladies of my Soul; I would say, Lord , let me find a learned, prudent, and pious Guide, who can inform my Judgment, and understands when to Absolve me; and not a blind or a deceitful Guide, who corrupts thy Holy Word, bends the Rule to my lusts, rather than conforms me to it, and endeavours more to please than save me ; who, by a too speedy administration of absolution, lulls me into a false peace, becomes the partner of my sin, the cause of my Damnation, and an instrument of the Devil, rather than the servant of Jesus Christ. For, O Lord, in that day, when all the secrets of our hearts, and all the evasions of self-love shall be

be laid open ; thou wilt not then judge me by the Maxims of my ghostly Guide, but by thy holy Gospel, and that light which thou hast given me, which I have so often rejected, not willing to have the darkness of my mind dispell'd by it.

Thou wilt judge me by those truths, which notwithstanding my corruptions have pierced to the bottom of my Soul, by that remorse which thou didst mingle with my most criminal pleasures, thereby to recall my heart ; but alas ! I always stifled them, that I might the more freely abandon my self to my passions ; those *lying Vanities*.

And lastly, O my God, 'tis by the Book of my own Conscience, and not that of my ghostly Guide, by which thou (my Sovereign Judge) wilt pronounce my Sentence, at that terrible day,

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ay, when thou wilt declare my
Eternal Doom.

REFLECT. IX.

*She prays that out of his Mercy he
would be pleas'd to direct her con-
tinually in the straight Way which
leads unto him, and not permit
her to flatter her self, that she
has repented, when she is running
on still in the broad way.*

AH, Lord, since I have no way
left to appease my Judge,
and to avoid the Sentence of
Death, but to judge my self.

Grant that I may examin my
self before the Tribunal of thy
Justice. Grant that by a sincere
repentance and a hearty sorrow
for my sins, I may appease thy
Vengeance; and suffer me not
so to deceive my self in my
repen-

repentance, and thereby oblige thee to judge me a second time, & punish me in the day of thy fiery indignation.

O Lord, inflame my heart with that spark of thy grace, which remains in my soul; and which sometimes makes it sigh within it self; change my pleasures into bitterness, my prosperity into affliction, that I may thereby be assur'd, thou hast chang'd thy hatred into love; and that I may not find in my sinful estate, a more deadly tranquillity, than in misery it self.

What can be more fatal to us, than to be deceiv'd in our Conversion, and in those Maxims of corrupted Morality, which ruin more than Debauchery it self.

For what more dangerous sickness can there be, than that which makes us refuse all Remedies? In fine, what more destructive,

structive, than a Reformation in appearance only ; which entices us out of the straight Way of Eternal Life , into the broad Rode of Sin? Lord, once again, I beseech thee, *chasten me not in thy displeasure* , as thou dost those Reprobates , whom thou punishest with prosperity , because they would not partake of thy holy sufferings.

Remember, O my God, that I am but dust and ashes, a fitter object of thy compassion, than thy fury.

Have mercy upon me ; O Lord, have mercy upon me ; let thy mercy be proportionate to the hainousness of my offences, and thy infinite Loving-kindness, which has no other object , no other bounds, but thy mercy alone ; In fine, give me a Pardon which may blot out all my offences, render me worthy of the mercy of God.

REFLECT.

REFLECT. X.

Motives of Trust in God, and Distrust of our selves. Jesus Christ alone can confirm our Faith and strengthen our Hope.

Correct me, O Lord, but in mercy ; considering my frailty and the byas of my corrupt nature, which inclines me unto sin, and rivets my affections to the things of this World.

Have compassion on my indigence and inconstancy , which divert me from any thing that is good, and maugre the light of Faith, render till my good Works abortive. O God , who lovest us more than we can love our selves, and who out of thy infinite goodness, hast rescued me from a false hope, by which I should

should have been flattered into final impenitence, and thus hast fav'd me contrary to my own inclination ; Give me a solid hope in thy Divine Merits, let me consider them as the only Object of my Trust, and principally when the Devil tempts me to despair and employs all his artifices, by the interposition of my sins and frailties, to eclipse the contemplation of thy Merits.

In this day of my affliction and distress (O my God) fix my eyes upon my blessed Saviour, dying on the Cross for my sins, and miserably torn by those *furrows which the Scourges made upon his back*. Let me consider, that thou didst endure all this to obtain pardon for my sins, and to encourage me to the taking up of thy Cross, upon which depends all my hopes of Salvation. Let me contemplate in
thy

thy Sacred Wounds, the right I a notorious sinner have, to hope in thy Mercies : Let the hope of a blessed Eternity, and the immutability of thy Promises, take off my Meditations from the vain and fleeting Enjoyments of this World, which hinder my Soul from aspiring to Eternal Felicity.

For thou knowest , O Lord , how little stability there is in my best Desires , and how speedily the impressions of thy Grace on my heart are defac'd by the vain *Idea's* of worldly pleasure.

How the hopes of some trifle, some vain lust puffs up my Soul ; how the Honours and Applause of this World makes me giddy and drunk with the fumes of Vain-glory.

In fine, Lord, thou knowest much better than I my self, how pliable I am to receive any impression

pression of evil, how averſe to any thing which is good, and how unſtable in the ways of thy Commandments.

This is the reaſon, O Lord, that I put no confidence in my ſelf; that my heart converts it ſelf to thee in all its wants and in the day of adverſity. To thee, O Lord, who enlighteneſt the darkeſt receſſes of my mind, who poſſeſſeſt me with patience under the ſevereſt afflictions, and art the Anchor of my Soul.

Here is, Lord, my Merit, my Riches, and my Refuge, when the conſideration of my wicked life terrifies me.

Here is, Lord, my comfort in this *vale of Tears and Spiritual Warfare*, wherein my Soul is made the Scene of all ſorts of paſſions.

In fine, This makes me hope more than fear; and rely on thy Mercies,

Mercies, rather than dread of thy Justice,

Ah, Lord, since I know by experience, that thou art a sure Help to those that trust in thee, Teach me to relie upon thee in my greatest Extremities, to rejoyce in thy Chastisements, and to look upon them as marks of thy favour; Assist me patiently to undergo them, and assure me that thou wilt lay upon me no more than I am able to bear; but wilt take thy Rod from me. when it shall be conveuent for the health of my Soul.

Let me be fully assur'd that thy Grace will, in thy good time, remove all Obstacles, which obstruct my Salvation, that my Sufferings, and the malice of my Enemies will have an end, but that *thy Mercies endure for ever*; that *after I have fought the good fight here on Earth,*

of thy Earth, I shall receive a *Crown of*
glory in Heaven: for thou ma-
 y ex- test the Rays of thy Grace to
 sure shine upon the just and the un-
 thee, just, which at the same time
 see in melt down the humbe Soul into
 to re- sincere repentance, and harden
 , and the habitual and obdurate sin-
 s of ner ; to the end that the one
 ently should not be tempted to Pre-
 e me sume, or the other to Dispair,
 e no but all remain in a continual de-
 ar ; pendence upon thy Grace.

me. Let me not then, O my God,
 for be in the number of those, who
 will be astonished and confounded
 that at the Great Day, because they
 good have rejected thy Grace ; for I
 les , cast my self wholly upon thy
 ou , Mercy , which is infinite , and
 the knows no bounds, without any
 ave reserve or confidence in my own
 en- merits.

ave But , O Lord , because Faith
 on and Hope and all other Vertues
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will avail me nothing, without Charity; because, tho' I could remove Mountains, and work all sorts of Miracles, yet my works would be dead and sinful, unless season'd by thy Love.

Give me therefore in the third place, that Charity which is the Crown of all other Vertues, and the Soul of our Good Works. I would say, Lord, Give me a fervent and a faithful Love to thee, whereby I shall easily overcome all seeming impossibilities, and satisfy the thirst of my panting Soul, after a sincere Conversion unto thee.

REFLECT.

REFLECT. XI.

*She Prays to God for a New Heart
inflam'd with his Love.*

FOR a Foundation of that Miraculous Work (which one very truly calls the chiefest Work of thy Grace) Create in me, O my God, a *New Heart*; a humble yet an resolute, steady and courageous heart, estranged from the World and its Vanities, and in short, a true Christian heart; which may possess me with the love of thee, enable me to expose my Life and Fortunes for the Confession of thy Name, and render me Obedient to the Foolishness of the Cross, in the midst of a crooked and perverse Generation, amongst whom it is esteem'd a scandal to be Religious.

A heart

A heart which will love thee in the midst of the severest Tryals , resisting the Concupiscence of the Flesh, mortifying its corrupt Appetites, and irregular Desires.

A heart which will love thee, when I am call'd upon to evidence that love, by loving my Enemies, and returning them *Good for Evil*.

A heart which for the love of thee, will deny it self when there is any competition between the Creature, and the Creatour; which will silence all the importunities of Nature, that it may become more obedient to the voice of thy Grace.

A heart which will love thee, when it must suffer for it; and will be content I should sacrifice my reputation and honour to thy Glory, in imitation of thy humble Life and opprobrious Death upon the Cross.

A heart

A heart which for the love of thee, will relinquish the favour of the Court, prefer thy Service, before the Splendour of my Family, or whatsoever is most dear to me; demonstrating hereby, that my love to thee surpasses that of the World.

Lastly, Grant, O my God, that I may love thee not only for thy benefits, when thou blestest me with prosperity and the abundance of good things in this World; but also when I am in disgrace, poverty, or any other Affliction: Learn me then to submit to the dispensations of thy Providence, and become more conformable to thy Divine Will.

For, O Lord, what testimonies can I give thee of my love, which will in the least answer thy love to me; nay, which are not infinitely surpass'd by
D those

those favours thou hast been
pleased to confer upon me.

REFLECT. XII.

*If the Soul finds any thing in the
World to settle its Affection
upon: How much the more ear-
nestly ought it to fix them upon
God after its Conversion.*

Let me not, O my God, ha-
ve less Zeal, Gratitude and
Fidelity towards thee, than
thou should have towards a Friend
who had offer'd to lay down his
life for the preservation of mine
and to this superlative testimony
of his love did continually add
thousand other benefits.

Since thou hast been pleas'd
to humble thy self, O my God,
in making me offers of thy Grace
and Favour, and loading me with

with thy Benefits; let me not forget thee, doubt of thy Mercy, or wilfully shut my eyes, and neglect to pay thee those acknowledgments of thy love and bounty, which in strict Justice is but *my reasonable service*.

For is it just, that I who pretend to act upon Principles of Generosity, who boast of my good Nature, Affection, Integrity and Gratitude towards my Friends, should be defective only in my Duty towards God? living without Faith, without Love, or so much as the Acknowledgment of his Benefits. Is it just, that I (a poor miserable creature, who owe all that I have unto my glorious Creatour) should offer up to him only faint acknowledgments, fickle desires, and in truth the least part of my self?

Is it just, that I who have been

so industrious to gratifie my
Idol-passions, who never forgot
any thing which might conduce
to their satisfaction, should com-
plain of the difficulty and im-
possibility of placing them upon
their due object, and devoting
my heart to the love of thee?

Lastly, Is it possible, that the
soul which thou didst create to
be the Temple of thy Divine
Love, should not be perswaded
to return unto thee, the center
of its happiness, after it has
wandred a thousand and a thou-
sand times from the way of thy
Commandments, unless thou art
pleas'd to prepare its paths, and
draw it to thy self with the
cords of thy Grace? No, Lord.
this is not reasonable: and there-
fore (maugre all the opposition I
find in my corrupt nature in sub-
mitting my self to the easie
yolk of thy Commandments)

thy

thy love which predominates in my Soul above the love of the world, the creature, or my self, shall unite me inseparably unto thee by the inexhaustible love of Jesus Christ.

By that love, which has taught me by experience, that there is nothing in this World worthy my friendship, nothing but continual troubles, and base ingratitude; which has discover'd to me by these gentle Corrections, that thou art a jealous God, and requirest the sacrifice of my whole heart unto thee, in acknowledgment of thy infinite Mercies, my Infidelity, and the sacrilegious misplacing of my Affections.

Ah Lord, since thou requirest nothing to prepare me for the pardon of my sins, but the cultivating of my love and the conversion of my heart unto thee;

D 3 Behold

Behold here is a heart ready to receive thy Commands, ready to obey thee, which is, truly to love thee; ready to undergo any thing, which conduces to the advancement of thy Glory, or the salvation of my Soul.

REFLECT. XIII

That a Penitent Soul should not examine what Sins are Damnable and what not, but avoid all appearance of Evil, every thing which may displease God; lest indulging it self in lesser crimes, it relapse at last into Habitual Debauchery.

IF it is thy pleasure to make my Repentance in some measure answer my Crimes, to prolong my life, and punish me in the same

same place where my Offences
 were committed; If it is thy
 pleasure to make my Sins my pu-
 nishment, and those Lusts which
 have hitherto idoliz'd the Exe-
 cutioners of thy Justice; *my*
heart is fixed, O God, my heart is
fixed: Nevertheless, Grant that
 I may be preserv'd in my Integri-
 ty thereby, that my present A-
 version to sinful Pleasures may
 be an Antidote sufficient to de-
 fend me from the infected breath
 of popular Applause: that my
 Repentaance may be more plea-
 sing to thee, and profitable to my
 self.

But, O Lord, let me not only
 be preserved from those Noto-
 rious Crimes which this day ren-
 der me the Object of thy Mercy;
 but grant also, that I may hate
 Sin more for the Malignity of its
 Nature, than from the Dread of
 thy Vengeance; let my Aversion

to it, proceed rather from thy love, than any respect to my self; that is, let me abhor it more for displeasing thee, than because it would be my ruin.

Let me not with the greatest part of the World, nicely weigh how much Carnal Liberty I may take, and yet continue in a state of salvation; but let me avoid every thing which displeases thee, as well as those grosser acts of sin, which will certainly damn my soul.

For what is more impious, O my God, than to say, I know that this Action will displease thee, that this Temptation is alluring, that these Pleasures obstruct the Emanations of thy Grace; and in short, that the Vanities of this World are at *enmity to the life of Godliness*; and yet I am resolv'd to venter on them, to disregard the all-
seeing

seeing Eye of a jealous God, the Remorse of my own Conscience: and all this because I am assured, that God is a merciful God, that he loves me, and is willing to pass by my Offences.

For is not this Way of Reasoning us'd by the greatest part of those servile Souls, whose Religious Actions proceed more from fear of the Devil, than out of love to God?

May not this Neglect of thy Grace, (which these Men esteem so small an Offence) grieve thy Holy Spirit, and become the Occasion of their Eternal Reprobation?

For the Devil, by tempting us at first to smaller Crimes, insinuates himself into our Affections, and by degrees renders the most detestable sins familiar; this he knows is the surest way

to destroy us, for by little and little it weakens the love and fear of God in our Souls, it gives him possession of our hearts, and at last *delivers them up unto him for a prey.*

For who knows, but this variety of company, this vain and frothy conversation which fills my heart with frivolous Desires, and weakens the Influences of thy Grace, may in the end seduce me from the simplicity of thy Word, and the observation of thy Holy Law?

Who knows but thou mayest leave me to my self, when thou perceivest that my Disobedience and Ingratitude towards [thee, proceeds from the abuse of thy Grace?

In fine, Who knows but the Splendour of Worldly Pomp, which is continually before my eyes ; which I behold with so
much

much complacency, and those Maxims of Carnal policy which are perpetually sounding in my ears ; may at last render me forgetful of those Solemn Protestations, which but a few days ago, I made unto thee ; when with Tears and Sighs, I so earnestly besought thee, to *have Mercy on me, and to deliver me from the jaws of Death.*

REFLECT.

REFLECT. XIV.

She prays unto God instantly, that he would be pleas'd to knock off those Chains which unite her Affections to the Creature; to grant her fresh Recruits of his Mercy, and Grace to make the right use of them.

AH Lord, who art terrible only to stubborn and impenitent Offenders, let not my Ingratitude divert the benign designs of thy Mercy unto my Soul; let not that sickness (by which thou didst intend to awaken me and bring me nearer to thy self) harden my heart, and *fill up the measure of my sins.*

Let not the return of my Life and Health bring along with it those Vicious Habits and that Inordinate Love of the Poms
and

and Vanities of the World, which I so passionately renounc'd when the Terrors of Death were upon me, when the Sight of my Sins and the Torments of Hell made all my Joints tremble, *and my Knees smite together.*

Deliver me also, from my self, O my God, from that natural inclination of my Will to all that is Evil, and that aversion to Good, which from time to time prevails with me to put off my Repentance.

Make thy Arm bear and break asunder those Bonds which unite my Affections too close to the Creature, and engage me too earnestly in the love of my self.

Hear me when I cry unto thee for fresh supplys of thy Mercy, and *redeem me from the vain conversation of the World.*

But

But above all let that Grace, that Love, that Bounty, (with which I am almost overwhelmed) kindly operate upon my Soul; and after they have made me sensible, how much a stranger my heart is to those Resolutions, which the Terror of thy approaching Judgments extorted from me; then let them accomplish those Gracious Purposes, for which they were sent by thy Indulgent Providence.

Lastly, Let not the hardness of my heart constrain thy Mercy to give place to Justice, let it not render thy Fatherly Corrections ineffectual, or provoke thee to leave me to my self, and give me up to my Unmortifi'd Affections: Grant me (with Tears I beseech thee) Grant me *thy Love*; for without it I have no Strength, no Merit, and by its assistance I shall be able to surmount

mount all the Difficulties which obstruct my Conversion, and to persevere to the end in the Way of thy Commandments.

REFLECT. XV.

What kind of Life that Person ought to lead who is under a Necessity, of Conversing much in the World ; that 'tis her Duty to resist whatsoever is contrary to the Commands of Jesus Christ.

ENlighten the Faculties of my Soul, O my God with that Divine Love, which will shew me the vanity of these transient Enjoyments, and enable me patiently to bear my DISGRACEFUL BANISHMENT.

Imprint in my Mind such lively *Idea's* of thy Mercy, and such grateful Resentments of thy Benefits,

nefits, as may be always before my eyes, and produce a real change in my heart ; a sure sign of my amendment by thy healthful Corrections: Let a Good Life be the effect of my earnest desires to give my self up to thee, let me chuse to die a thousand times rather than offend thee ; and let me be found, at thy coming, amongst those Wise Virgins who have trimm'd their *Lamps with Good Works.*

And tho' for the most part those persons who would pass from one Extream to another in a Moment, from the most degenerate Debauchery, to the highest Pitch of Devotion, are unsuccessful in their endeavours, and finish nothing, because they undertake too much ; yet I cannot give bounds to my desires, I cannot but wish to love thee as much as I am able: 'tis this which
above

above all things I thirst after ;
and to this end, I beseech thee,
Enliven my Impotent Endeavours
with thy Grace.

I will not defer my Repen-
tance, O my God, until the
Night of thy Justice overtakes
me, when no man can work;
but I will be up and be doing, as
soon as ever the day of thy Grace
springs from on high, and en-
deavour to work out my Salva-
tion : I will not ask counsel of
my Lusts, or deliberate with my
self, whether 'tis time to forsake
my vicious conversation, and be-
come a new creature: Nor am
I so vain as to think my self ca-
pable of great matters; For I
am conscious of my own Wants,
my Sluggishness, and my incon-
stancy, and therefore with eyes
lift up to Heaven, I patiently ex-
pect the dawning of thy love, and
the gentle influences of thy Grace
upon my soul. I will

I will begin to magnifie thy Mercies amongst those who maintain a continual Trafick of Sin and Vanity, with whom my Discourse us'd to be about Riches, Honours, Pleasures, and Prosperity.

I will declare to those persons who worship nothing but their Interest, that thou art my God, the only Object of my Adoration; that in the enjoyment of thy Favour, consists all my Riches, my Grandeur, and my Happiness; that all I have is in thy hands, and that when thou hast consummated the Gréat Work of my Conversion, I shall be more happy, than if I had Conquer'd all the Kingdoms of the World.

I will forsake that frothy and effeminate Company with whom I have lost so much precious time; which I will endeavour to redeem by convincing them, that
the

the unprofitable, vain and idle course of life which they look upon as their Priviledge, will destroy the health of their Everlasting Souls.

If I cannot attain to be Eminently Religious, I will endeavour to be as good as I can; if I cannot produce the testimonies of an ardent Affection, I will dedicate to thee my Infant Love; if my Faith is not so Active as that of the humble *Centurian*, (which inclined thee to give a present return unto his Prayers) yet I will take advice of thy Ministers, and with united Prayers, Implore the Augmentation of it.

That I may live up to those Religious Principles, which thou hast planted in my Soul, I will dread the Company of those debauch'd Wretches, who glory in their Wickedness, and (as the
holy

Holy Scripture speaks) *have not God in all their thoughts.*

Yea, Lord, I will break off all engagements with those profess'd Libertines, whose society instils Irreligion into our Minds, and is a blemish to the most unspotted Reputation; who puff us up with such an opinion of our selves, as justly merits the desertion of thy grace; and guild over their Monstrous Vices with the specious Names of good Nature and Honour: Tho' their Persons and Humour may be agreeable to me, yet I am resolv'd faithfully to perform these Vows which I have made unto thee, O my God; and that henceforwards I will not maintain any strict Correspondence, Familiarity or Friendship with them. For certainly the hating of those who hate thee, is but a small acknowledgment of thy infinite love.

REFLECT.

REFLECT. XVI.

That she should associate her self with those persons who truly fear God, and that she ought not to entangle her self again in those things which the World calls State, Riches, Fortune, and Grandeur.

O Lord, in whose hands are the hearts of men, and who turnest them whether soever thou pleasest; change the inclinations of my Soul, and sanctifie my Love, that in the choice of my Friends, I may regard more thy Grace, than any Natural Endowments; rather the edifying of my self, and the seasoning my heart with thy holy Truths, than my own Diversion.

For

For thou knowest, Lord, how insensibly those things which I frequently behold, make impressions upon my mind ; how conformable I am to the company with which I converse ; and how wonderfully good or bad Examples influence my Life and Conversation.

Grant therefore, O my Lord and my God, that I may take delight in the Company of Vertuous and Religious Men ; that instead of talking about the World and its vanities my discourse may be concerning Eternity, thy Grace, thy Greatness, and those infinite Mercies which thou hast been pleased to bestow upon my Soul ; and if those impressions which sin has left upon my mind, should for the present render me averse to these innocent pleasures ; if the taint of my corrupt Nature should dis-

relish

relish these Diversions which yield more solid satisfaction, than the most sensual enjoyments of this World; then I beseech thee, to enlighten my Understanding with thy Grace and strengthen my Faith, to withhold me from, gratifying my inordinate Appetites, to work in me a repentance for those sins which render me incapable of the sweet Comforts of thy *Holy Spirit*.

For, O Lord, if thou dost not expect that I should exercise much Rigour on my Body, 'tis because I should be more fervent in Spirit, and mortifie my corrupt Appetites the more? for a deep sense of thy Death and Sufferings, is absolutely necessary to restore the health of my Soul.

Now seeing the best way to rectifie my warp'd desires, is to bend them towards the contrary
extream,

extream, Grant that the byas of my corrupt Nature may never prevail on me, to bestow so much as one favourable look on my divorced Lusts; for 'tis but reasonable that I should punish my self for my too earnest pursuits of sensual pleasure, by mortifying those Irregular Appetites, and denying my self even Lawful Diversions; it is but just, that I who have trifled away so much time on the Stage of the World, should retire my self from those pleasures, which are the fewel of my inordinate lusts; and deny my self, the World and all its pleasures, that I may be truly the Disciple of the *Lord Jesus*.

Let the certain assurance of a future Life, O my God, demonstrate to me the Frailty and Vanity of those things which we call State, Wealth, Fortune, and Grandeur; Let me not (with
the

the greatest part of the World)
 engage all the force of my Affec-
 tions in the pursuit of them ;
 as if there were no future Life,
 Happiness, or Eternity : Let me
 esteem them according to their
 true value ; but let me place my
 Affections only upon that solid
 good, where true Joys are to be
 found. For how can any real
 Contentment proceed from such
 empty Trifles ? How can any last-
 ing satisfaction be built upon such
 fading Enjoyments ? which make
 themselves wings and fly away,
 when we think we have the surest
 possession of them.

Lastly, Let me contemplate
 thy Works in the Government
 of the World ; in which (as in
 the Scene of a Comedy) Provi-
 dence orders the Persons, dispo-
 ses the Riches and Honours, and
 lulls asleep the generality of
 Mankind ; who being rouz'd up

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at the end of the A& , stand amaz'd , that they have been all the while in a Dream, that the gaudy Apparitions are vanish'd, and nothing left but dust and smoak. Yea, Lord, I confess that after I have thoroughly ransack'd all the stores of sensual Enjoyments, I cannot find any real satisfaction or lasting pleasure ; but only in thy Love and thy Service.

REFLECT.

REFLECT. XVII.

That Charity towards our Neighbour obliges us carefully to avoid not only every Action which may be injurious to his Life, Goods, and Reputation; but also detracting Speeches, and foolish jesting.

O That my Soul might be inspir'd with thy Love, O my God; that it might be my only Treasure, my Glory, and my Delight; that those chaste and Divine Pleasures which flow from it, might enlighten my Understanding and allure my Will to cleave unto thee; that it might work in me a hearty sorrow for my past Offences, and a holy fear of thy Divine Majesty; that it might take possession of my Soul, and not endure the

most darling lust to lurk therein. O that my love to my Neighbour might in some measure answer thy love to me, that I might love his Soul above my own Life, and never be prevail'd upon, for the gain of the whole World, to wound my Conscience, by injuring him either in estate, or good name.

But since generally nothing is esteem'd a breach of Charity towards our Neighbour, but such open Violence, or abusive Language, as a sober *Heathen* would blush at; since few persons make a conscience of those Jears, which touch a man to the quick, those Genteel ways of less'ning his Reputation, by insinuating his Frailties, and ridiculing his Humour, because 'tis done in sport, and for diversion of the Company: Therefore, I beseech thee, O Lord, open my eyes, and convince

vince me, that these sins (which I am apt to call pardonable Infirmities) displease thee the more, in that they are agreeable to our corrupt Natures, and the genuine off-spring of self-love.

Let me heartily detest this mischievous diversion, to which I have been too much given up; let my sorrow for this sin in some measure equal the pleasure I took in it; and let that which was the great Incentive of my Guilt, produce a Fountain of Tears to blot it out.

For is it not highly reasonable, O Lord, that I should bewail that Mirth whereby I have injur'd my Neighbour, and undone my self; and that Laughter which has cost me my Soul, and the Favour of my God? Is it not just, that seeing I cannot make any extraordinary demonstrations of my Repentance and Love to

thee ; I should testify the sincerity of my Intentions , by abstaining from every thing which gratifies my Natural Corruption ; that by a discreet reservedness in my discourse for the future, I should endeavour to make amends for the former lavishness of my Tongue ; and by casting out all those sins which have offended thee, invite thy return into the Temple of my Soul ?

Whensoever therefore, O my God, I have any desires to conform my self to the World, to gratifie my depraved Appetites, or to shew the gayety of my Humour ; whensoever these sinful delights come into my mind, and begin to blow up the sparks of my corruption ; whensoever I perceive these motions of complacency towards my self, and envy against my Neighbour, these ferments of my passions, and melancholy

choly distemper of my mind, which if in the least encouraged, will easily get the better of me: Then let me consider, O Lord, that if I do not carefully suppress these first motions to sin, I resign up my Soul to its most inveterate Enemies: and on the contrary, if I nip them in the bud, if I sacrifice my passions and my pleasures unto thee, I shall encline thee to have Mercy upon me, and to blot out my Offences, I shall give thee the Homage of a contrite and penitent Heart, *In which thou art well pleased.*

Shew me therefore, that *these are the Fruits worthy of Repentance*; these are the Restitutions thou requirest of me, and the choicest Victims my love can offer up.

REFLECT. XVIII.

That she ought to desire of God the Gift of Prayer ? which is the only means the Soul can make use of to confirm its wavering Resolutions.

O God, who takest delight in rewarding that servant, who has been faithful in a few things, supply the indigency of my love out of the abundance of thy goodness ; Let its shallow streams be swallow'd up in the vast Ocean of thy Divine Charity, lose themselves in it, and be mixed with it, that so it may be always conformable unto thine.

For I confess my frailty, that my Heart is an ungrateful and barren Soil, producing nothing but Briers and Thorns, unless cultivated by thy Grace ; Water
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it therefore, O Lord, with the Dew of Heaven, which gives fruitfulness to the Plants, and paints the Flowers; which inclines our wills, and affects our hearts; which after it has produc'd in our Soul, *Works worthy of Repentance*, protects them from those scorching beams, the flames of our lust, and preserves them safe unto the Harvest.

This is the comfortable hope and earnest desire of thy poor servant, that which sustains him in this tedious Pilgrimage, whilst he languishes with expectation of the *Beatifical Vision*.

But that thy Inspirations may have the desired effect upon my Soul, that I may receive them with suitable affections, that I may prepare my heart for so great favours which thou art pleas'd to bestow upon it. With my eyes and hands lift up to

Heaven, I will meet these Blessings, I will forsake every sin which unfits me for them, and do all the good thy Grace shall enable me to perform. And that the streams of thy Mercy may never fail me, a poor thirsty sinner, I will continually encrease them with my Tears; that is to say, Lord, by an hearty repentance and an affectionate grief for having so often offended thee.

And since Prayer is the Channel by which thou conveyest thy Grace and thy Light into our Souls, since it is the most fragrant Incense I can offer up unto thee, for obtaining of fresh Mercies; teach me to Pray unto thee with Reverence, with the Adoration of all my Faculties, and with my whole Heart.

And that I may the more devoutly perform this Duty, shew me the Necessity, and the Advantage

tage of it, take away their surprise, which the very name of Prayer is apt to produce in me, and shew me that 'tis not so difficult, so tiresom a Duty as some persons represent it to themselves, who are ignorant *that as in thy House there are many Mansions*, so there are different ways of conversing with thee; some of which require only the sincerity of our Hearts.

RE-

REELECT. XIX.

*What the Nature of Prayer is ,
and how faithful a Penitent Soul
ought to be to its Resolutions of
constantly performing this Holy
Exercise.*

'TIs true , Lord , that the
Prayer of a Devout Soul,
(who has retir'd himself from
the World, and is fill'd with the
Joys of thy Holy Spirit) is like
a Box of precious Ointment ,
which as soon as ever it ap-
proaches the fire, sends forth a
fragrant Odour : and that the
Groans of a poor Creature ,
who lies groveling on the Earth,
who only crawls on in the path
of Vertue are like troubled Wa-
ters, which must be distil'd drop
by drop, before they will afford
any useful Liquor.

Never-

Nevertheless, O my God, it seems most reasonable (that since Prayer is only a lifting up of our hearts unto thee, in which we lay before thee our Wants and beg Supplies) I say, it seems most reasonable to me, that she who is tormoiled with the Affairs of the World, who finds her self in a languishing Condition, harras'd by a thousand Miseries, and surround-ed with a thousand Dangers ; is under a more pressing necessity of Praying to thee, than the Religious person who is hedg'd about with thy Mercies.

It appears highly reasonable to me, not only that she is under a greater necessity, but also that she is better disposed to perform this Duty of Prayer, than one who is more habitually devout ; because she cannot chuse
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but do it, whether she thinks of it or no : For if 'tis natural for a poor man to ask an Alms, for a sick man to bemoan himself, and for one in danger to lift up his eyes towards Heaven ; How much more natural is it for that Soul to pray unto his God, who is continually pressed with these three Calamities ; who is always poor, always sick, and always in danger, the three chief hinges upon which this Duty turns.

Therefore that I may delight my self in this Angelick Exercise, teach me, O my God, that Prayer is nothing else but a pleasing converse between the Soul and its Creator ; a Torch which dispels the darkness of its understanding, and a Glass which truly represents all its imperfections.

An Eloquent Preacher, who Imprints the Law of God in our Minds; a faithful Guide, who conducts us safely through the strait Way of our Salvation; a sweet Sleep, which gives the Soul repose in the Arms of God's Providence; a Holy Joy, which renders sinful pleasures nauseous, and all sensual delights insipid, in comparison with those of the Cross.

A comfortable contemplation of our latter end, which tames our Appetites with the thoughts of Death, which sweetens his approaches with the Expectation of Eternity, and an ardent Desire of the *Beatifical Vision*.

Lastly, 'Tis the Crucifixion of our Passions, the Mortification of our Self-love, and the Resurrection of the Grace of Jesus Christ in our Souls.

Prepare therefore the Palate of my Soul, O my God, that it may relish this delicious Manna : for the only way to persevere to the end in thy Commandments, in the midst of a crooked and perverse Generation, to slight the World and all its Vanities, and to love thee above all things, is to converse with thee by Prayer, not only as with our Father and our God, but as with our most affectionate and familiar Friend. I would say, Lord, the only way to lay before thee all those Passions which tyrannise in our Minds, all those terrible Objects which fright us, all those Frailties which humble us, all those Sorrows which consume us, all those Grievs which rend us; and to delineate all the confusion of our Minds, is to come unto thee, (as holy *David* did) and lay all

all our Afflictions, all the burthen of our Souls, and all our Prayers at the Foot-stool of thy Throne.

For alas! if our Self-love takes so much pleasure in relating our Afflictions to our impotent Friends, who can do nothing but hear and pity them; how much greater comfort should it be, that we are encouraged to pour out our Wants before a God, who, if he pleases, can help us; who is oftentimes more delighted to see a Soul humbled by its Misery, than elated with the Eminent Instances of its Vertue.

Incline me therefore, O my God, to spend some moments every day at the Foot-stool of thy Throne, and let me not lie poring on a Picture, or repeat my Prayers from a Book which I do not understand; but let the Subject of my Devotions be,
my

my own Wants , and whatsoever may render me more humble. For I am too sensible of my own Imperfections , to distract my Mind with other Objects, besides my own Misery and the infinite Mercy of my God.

REFLECT. XX.

That the Misery to which Sin has reduc'd us, ought to be the Subject of our Prayers, and that 'tis good to begin them with the Considerations of the stupendious Myserie of our Saviour's Passion.

ALas! how can I meditate on my Vileness, who am puffed up with Pride, who can only Pray unto thee, to break off my Ambition and Vain-glory, which like unmanagable Horses, precipi-

precipitate my Soul into the Abyſs of thy fiery Indignation.

How can I hearken to thy Word, or taſte the ſweet Comforts of thy Holy Spirit, who am ſurrounded with a thouſand Paſſions, a thouſand Vanities, which diſtract my thoughts, when I come to appear before thee? What can I do more, than Groan within my ſelf, when, as the Royal *Pſalmiſt* has it, *my feet are hurt with the fetters of ſin,* and I am in Captivity to my Unmortified Affections; until the gentle Influences of thy Grace create in my heart a love to thy Law.

How can I liſt up my ſelf to Heaven, whiſt my Affections are groveling on the Earth? How can I contemplate thy Greatneſs and thy Excellencies, whiſt my mind is diſtracted by its own Miſeries, and aſtoniſhed at that
immi-

imminent danger , which only gives me space to beg thy Mercy, and to say , with the Apostles, *Lord, save us, or we perish.*

Nevertheless, O my Lord , since the remembrance of thy bitter Passion ought to be deeply engraven upon my Soul ; Grant, O my God , that the beginning of my Prayer may have a respect to that adorable Myserie , that my heart may be mollifi'd by the consideration of thy sufferings, render'd more susceptible of the impressions of thy Love and thy Grace ; and Meditate with more benefit on its own Vanity.

REFLECT.

REFLECT. XXI.

That we ought not to be weary of Praying, because we do not find present Comfort, but that we should be faithful to our Resolutions, and have recourse to this Holy Exercise, when we are wrack'd by the greatest pains, and distress'd by the severest Afflictions.

OH! that I could be so constant in my Resolutions, as every day to prostrate my self at the Foot-stool of thy Throne, at that set-time which I have consecrated unto thee, when thou art pleas'd to give me Audience; and that nothing might divert me from performing *this one thing necessary.*

Let

Let me constantly throw myself at thy feet , in whatsoever condition my Soul may be ; to the end that when distractions and barrenness of mind hinder me from fixing my thoughts upon thee , or speaking of any thing , but those Vanities which have taken possession of my heart ; then the labour which I undergo , those painful pangs which I endure , and those irksome attempts which I make to pour forth a Prayer , may render it more acceptable unto thee.

Let me not fancy , that thou hast abandoned me , because my mind is sometimes overwhelmed with the load of my Corruption , because at such a time as this I cannot form so much as one good thought : For I will still look up and pray unto thee ; I will say with that great King,

King, the holy *David*, *I am like a beast before thee*, without spirit, without speech, and without consideration.

Tho' I cannot perform this Duty with a steady intention of mind, yet I will not depart from the Foot-stool of thy Throne; I will pray unto thee with my Heart and with my Will, I will put my trust in thy Goodness; and tho' thou may'st not for the present unite my Soul unto thy self, by the sweet influences of thy Grace, yet thou wilt accept of my endeavour in this deplorable condition, and esteem it as a testimony of my sincere affection, that it cleaves unto thee, as well when thou art pleased to withdraw thy Comforts, as when it enjoys thy ravishing Consolations.

But,

But , good Lord , let me not only Pray unto thee with my Understanding , and with my Tongue , but also with my Heart ; Let me not only Pray unto thee in my Cloſet , and in the Church , where the conſideration of thy Divine Preſence inſpires me with Devotion ; but grant , O my God , that by Acts of Faith , Hope , and Charity , I may conſecrate unto thee , the Oratory of my Heart ; in which I will offer up the Sacrifice of Prayer ; For the Devotion of a true Chriſtian is not confin'd to Words , but extends it ſelf unto his Thoughts and Actions , in all Places and upon all Occaſions.

-I will do this in the miſt of my Worldly Buſineſs , nay in the miſt of my Diversions , when retiring my ſelf into that Cloſet of my Breſt , which is dedica-

dedicated to thee alone, where no eye but thine sees me; I will address my prayer unto thee.

When I find my self most expos'd to Temptation; when I have the greatest sense of my own Weakness; when Self-love most Tyrannizes over me, and the sweet poyson of pleasure most allures my Soul; then will I sigh most fervently unto thee, and without waiting for a suitable place, or more convenient time, I will presently lay open the Wounds of my Soul and implore thy help.

This shall be at the beginning and end of all my Actions, in the Morning and at Night; in the midst of my Journeys my heart shall take thee for its *Polar* Star; it shall relye upon thee in every condition, yield it self up to thy Conduct, and implore the succours of thy Grace.

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But , good Lord , let me not only Pray unto thee with my Understanding , and with my Tongue , but also with my Heart ; Let me not only Pray unto thee in my Closet , and in the Church , where the consideration of thy Divine Presence inspires me with Devotion ; but grant , O my God , that by Acts of Faith , Hope , and Charity , I may consecrate unto thee , the Oratory of my Heart ; in which I will offer up the Sacrifice of Prayer ; For the Devotion of a true Christian is not confin'd to Words , but extends it self unto his Thoughts and Actions , in all Places and upon all Occasions.

I will do this in the midst of my Worldly Business , nay in the midst of my Diversions , when retiring my self into that Closet of my Breast , which is dedica-

dedicated to thee alone, where no eye but thine sees me; I will address my prayer unto thee.

When I find my self most expos'd to Temptation, when I have the greatest sense of my ovvn Weakness; when Self-love most Tyrannizes over me, and the sweet poyson of pleasure most allures my Soul; then will I sigh most fervently unto thee, and without waiting for a suitable place, or more convenient time, I will presently lay open the Wounds of my Soul and implore thy help.

This shall be at the beginning and end of all my Actions, in the Morning and at Night; in the midst of my Journeys my heart shall take thee for its *Polar* Star; it shall relye upon thee in every condition, yield it self up to thy Conduct, and implore the succours of thy Grace.

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this will be done with the greater ease, because I shall better express my own wants and my entire dependence on thy Mercy, by one single sigh, which proceeds from the bottom of my Oppressed Heart, than by the most prolix Devotions.

I will joyn vvith thy Saints, and praise thee in thy Sanctuary with my Lips and my vvith voice; but I will also Pray unto thee with Sighs and Groans unutterable; in my greatest dangers, and under the most violent pains I will look up unto thee, and in all the actions of my life, with holy *David*, *I will have thee always before my eyes.*

REFLECT.

REFLECT. XXII.

The indispensable Necessity of Prayer, without which 'tis impossible to have any serious thoughts of our Salvation.

WHat is that Soul, O my God, who lives in this World without Prayer? I speak not of those persons who only mind their Pleasures, and providing for their Bodies, who are Christians in Name only, and may be more fitly rank'd amongst brute Beasts, than reasonable Creatures.

But I mean those who frequently reflect upon themselves, who consider to what end a Rational Soul was given them, and dominion over the rest of the Creation.

Who consider that there is a God ; I mean , are convinc'd , that none but Fools doubt of it.

Who consider how it comes to pass, that those persons who believe the Histories of *Alexander* and *Cesar* , yet question that of Jesus Christ.

Who consider whether that Faith which was propagated by twelve poor Fishermen, and confirm'd by an infinite number of Miracles wrought in the sight of all nations , can now reasonably be call'd in question.

Who consider whether that *Army of Martyrs* , who seal'd this Faith with their Blood, are not a sufficient *cloud of Witnesses* to evince its Truth.

Who consider whether all those Prophecies in the Old Testament, concerning the Coming
only and

and Kingdom of the Messiah which have been punctually accomplish'd, ought to pass for Fables.

Who consider those incomprehensible Mysteries, the Effects of the Omnipotent Grace of Jesus Christ, and his infinite Love towards us his poor Creatures.

Lastly, Who consider all God's wonderful Works upon their Souls, that admirable Conduct, which at the same enlightneth our Understandings, by his Fatherly Corrections, and preserves us, which by his Divine Providence orders all things for some end best known unto himself; and makes every thing tend to the welfare and advantage of his Elect.

'Tis for these persons (who having the clouds of their Understandings dispell'd by the light of these indubitable truths, yet are presently blinded by the vanities of the World) 'tis for their Good, as well as my own, I consider, That a Soul in this World, without Prayer, without reflection, and without Reliance upon God's Providence, is like a Ship in the midst of a Tempest, without a Pilot, like a Man who fancies himself wonderfully enlightned and yet is blinded with the thickest Mists of Ignorance and Error.

He is like that person who fancies he knows God, has Faith, Hope, and Charity, and yet adores his Idol-passions; he is like a Traveller in a strange Country, without either Guide or Compass, who the faster he walks,

walks, the farther he wanders from his Home.

He is like that person who being tumbled into the bottom of a deep Pit, yet will not make use of the Cord which is let down to draw him up.

Lastly, He is like that foolish builder, who endeavours to erect a Magnificent Pallace, without a Foundation.

For how can he work out his Salvation, *who has not God in all his thoughts*? How can he observe his Laws, and obey his Commandments, who never thinks on them? How can he bridle his Tongue, and all his head-strong Passions, without the assistance of God's Grace? And how can he obtain this Grace, who will not be at the pains to ask it? How can he avoid falling into Despair, who goes on in a sinful course of

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life,

life, which he knows will end in the Damnation of his Soul? Who either uses the most preposterous means imaginable to quiet his Conscience; that is, by putting out of his mind the thoughts of another Life, an Eternity, and a God; or else doth not *plase his trust in him.*

In fine, How can he be a good Christian and love Jesus Christ, who does not know him, does not consider that he dy'd for us, does not meditate on his Life, his Actions, or his Holy Gospel?

REFLECT. XXIII.

She desires of God the Gift of Prayer, that she may make Death, Eternity, and God's Judgments the Subject of it ; which are the proper means to season our Souls with the Fear of God.

AH Lord, since I am convinc'd, that Prayer (which is nothing but the lifting up of our Souls unto thee, our continual endeavour to pluck down the strongholds of Satan, and establish the Kingdom of Jesus Christ) is so easie , so necessary and so Profitable a Duty.

Since I am assured by thy Holy Word , and the Examples of Holy Men , that 'tis a floating plank which will bear up my Soul in all the storms of this life, and

convey it safe into the blessed Haven of Eternity; that is, *to the Heavenly Jerusalem which is above, where all tears shall be wiped away from our eyes, and we shall enjoy those pleasures which are at thy right-hand, for evermore.*

Give me an earnest Desire and Delight in Praying to thee; let it be as pleasant and familiar, as ever the Vanities of the World have been, for which I have so often hazarded the Salvation of my Soul.

But since Death is the end of all things, and the most profitable Subject of our Meditations; Grant, O my God, that I may daily *consider my last end; when (to speak in the Words of the Holy Scripture) my breath goeth forth, I return to the earth, and in that very day my thoughts perish.*

That

That Time which *will come like a Thief in the Night*, and seize upon our Souls.

That Time after which there will be no more space for Repentance.

That Time for which we ought to be prepared all the days of our life, that we may not be surprised thereby.

That Time on which depends the Happiness or Misery of our Souls to all Eternity.

O Death ! how dreadful are thy Approaches to those persons who never thought of thee, who placed all their Happiness in the Goods of this World ?

O Death ! how terrible art thou to those men unto whom thou art, the end of their Happiness, and the beginning of their Sorrows.

In

In short, By which they are deprived of all the Enjoyments of this World, of that Body which they so much Idoliz'd, of a Voluptuous Life and the gratification of their Inordinate Appetites. I say, How terrible art thou to those, who never knew God, but only to offend him?

But then how much more amazing is the Contemplation of Eternity, to those men who never pursu'd any other Happiness, but what this life affords; who never thought of Repentance and forsaking their sins, until they were unable to pursue their Lusts, and rendred incapable to receive the impressions of any other Passion, but Fear?

O Eternity, Eternity! how exquisitely Tormenting are the thoughts of thee to that person,

son , who beholds Hell ready to receive him for the punishment of their sins , who dares not Hope in God's Mercy ; but would think himself sufficiently happy , could he but have the same end *with the Beasts that perish.*

And finally, O Eternity ! How dreadful are the thoughts of thee to that person, who at his last hour , finds that he cannot Love God, and yet cannot chuse but Fear him.

But, O blessed Eternity ! how comfortable art thou to that person who has led a good Life, and mortifi'd his Corruptions in this World.

To a Sinner who is Converted, has Repented of his Sins, and has a good Foundation of Hope in thy Mercy.

To

To him who is accustomed to *die daily*, and has forsaken the World and its Vanities, before he is compelled to it by the unalterable Law of Nature.

In fine, to him who sincerely loves God, and enjoys in this life the earnest of Eternal Happiness.

REFLECT.

REFLECT. XXIV.

That she will every Day offer up unto God the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, for opening her Eyes and converting her unto himself. That she will Write down these Resolutions which she made at the time of her Conversion; to the end that she may be always mindful of these Obligations she has laid upon her self, and by which she must be Judg'd at the Last Day.

AH! Lord, who in working thy Miracles dost always regard some great end; Hast thou not restored my Health, that thou may'st accomplish the blessed purposes of thy Grace upon my Soul, that by a thorough conversion of my Heart unto thee,

thee, I might pass from this state of death, (or as the Royal Prophet speaks) *from the Terrors of Hell*, to such a Religious course of Life, as those Devout Souls led, who now sleep in the Lord ; who did not presume on thy Mercy, and from thence defer their Repentance to the last Moment ?

Yes, Lord, I acknowledge thy Mercy in the midst of thy Judgements, and the constant protection of thy Providence in all the Accidents of my life.

For this is the Reason why thou hast so much Afflicted me, so much distressed me , so often changed my Desires and my Resolutions, that hereby thou may'st wean me from my self.

And therefore that I may maintain an inviolable Fidelity ty towards thee for the future,
that

that I may serve thee, that I may love thee, and rather die a thousand times than return again to my former Vain Conversation; I have Writ this Paper with my own hand, as a Register of thy Mercies, my most Intimate Resolutions, and all thy Adorable Truths: That if at any time I should forget my self, I might hereby be put in mind of my Duty, and that Model of Holy Living I have resolved on; if my Faith should falter, my Hope should languish, or my Charity grow cold, and my Corruptions begin to struggle in my Soul; the reading of these Prayers and the contemplation of thy Bounty and thy Grace, might reduce them to their former temper.

That if at any time I should forget that Agony which the consideration of thy Justice produc'd

duc'd in my Mind, when like a condemned Malefactor on the Scaffold, I was impatient to be freed from the Terrors of Death; I might recollect my self by reading of these Reflections, which I writ upon this self-same Bed, where the Ministers on one side, and the Physicians on the other, gave me little Hope of my Life, or my Salvation; where I lay helpless, like a poor Beast, and could do nothing in this Great Work.

O thou God of my Salvation! in whose hands are my Soul and my Eternal Happiness, who didst reprieve me from the Grave, and didst crown me with thy Mercies, and fill my Soul with Holy Desires, *who hast renew'd my Age, as that of an Eagle*; who hast promised, that thy *Anger shall not endure for ever* against those who
 fear

fear thee ; that thou wilt not punish them according to their deserts, but wilt put away their Offences as far as the East is from the West ; who assurest us , that like as a Father pitieth his Children, so thou wilt have compassion on us ; because thou knowest our weakness, and that we are but dust ; that our most steady Resolutions are but as a Traveller who tarrieth but for a night, and as the morning dew, which soon passeth away.

Lastly , Who workest good out of the evil of our sins, and who alone canst convert me : I beseech thee therefore to turn my Heart.

Because my Soul is humbled and overwhelmed with shame and grief for displeasing thee.

Because my Soul puts its trust in thee ; and languishes after the enjoyment of thy presence.

But

But above all, O my God, hear my humble Supplication, because I have made thee the only Object of my Love, and because *thy Mercy rejoyses over all thy Works.*

Finally, Lord, have pity on me, because I am poor and miserable, and thou art Infinitely Rich and Merciful.

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